

**REMARKS**

Claims 11-37 are pending. By this Amendment, claims 11, 16, 17, 19 and 20 are amended, and claims 21-37 are added. Reconsideration in view of the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, the Abstract was objected to as including purported merits of the invention. By this Amendment, a new Abstract has been provided on the attached separate page which eliminates any reference to merits of the invention.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection are respectfully requested.

The Examiner has provided guidelines including a preferred layout of the specification of the utility application. Consistent with these guidelines, the specification has been amended herein to include various subheadings.

Claims 17 and 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph as being indefinite. By this Amendment, the term “preferably” has been eliminated from claims 17 and 19, thereby obviating the rejection.

Claims 11-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over JP 2515420 B to Okamoto et al. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Independent claim 11 is directed to a dishwasher comprising a washing container to retain therein objects to be washed by the dishwasher, and a system to dry objects to be washed, the system including a heater to heat at least part of the air present in the dishwasher and a humidity sensor to detect the humidity of at least part of the air present in the dishwasher, the heater being controllable solely as a function of the detected humidity.

Okamoto et al. does not teach or suggest this subject matter. Instead, Okamoto et al. discloses a dishwasher having a drying chamber 6, a heater 17 and a moisture sensor 50. Okamoto et al. not only considers the desired dryness which is calculated by virtue of moisture sensor 50 in conjunction with a microprocessor 48, but it also calculates a moisture curve (see Figure 7) and the time it takes in order to reach the predetermined dryness level selected by the user. Accordingly, Okamoto et al. does not teach or suggest that the heater is controllable solely as a function of the detected humidity. In Okamoto

et al. the drying process is carried out as a function of humidity as well as time. Similarly, Okamoto et al. does not teach or suggest the subject matter of method claim 16 which includes the step of controlling the heater solely as a function of the detected humidity.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

Claims 11-14 and 16-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over JP 01-141642 A to Asai. Applicants note paragraph 24 of the Office Action that a full English translation has been ordered and as such Applicants look forward to receipt of such especially in the event that the rejection is maintained. In any event, the current rejection of Asai is respectfully traversed.

Claim 11 is directed to a dishwasher comprising a washer container to retain therein objects to be washed by the dishwasher and a system to dry the objects to be washed.

According to the translation provided by the Office Action, Asai teaches a tableware dryer including a case 5 and an electric heater 4 blown by a blower 3. A sensor detects humidity in the drying case 5. Accordingly, based on the Abstract, Asai does not teach a “dishwasher” as set forth in claim 11. In addition, Asai does not teach a washing container for retaining therein an object to be washed by the dishwasher, as recited in claim 11.

In regard to claim 16, Asai does not teach a method of cleaning and drying objects to be washed in dishwashers or the additional steps of subjecting the objects to be washed to at least one of a cleaning, rinsing and a clear rinsing process after which the drying process takes place.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

New claims 21-37 are presented for the Examiner’s consideration. Dishwasher claim 21 and its analog method claim 26 are directed to a non-electronic controller to control the system for drying the objects to be washed as a function of the humidity determined by the humidity sensor. In the Office Action (paragraphs 9 and 17), it is specified that Okamoto et al. and Asai use electronic controller means.

In addition, independent dishwasher apparatus claim 29 and its analog method claim 33 specify that the system for drying the objects to be washed is switchable to an off position in an independent manner as a function of the humidity determined by the humidity sensor. In the Office Action (paragraphs 10 and 18), the Examiner takes the position that Asai and Okamoto et al. operate in a non-independent manner.

Applicants respectfully requests entry of the present Amendment. If the Examiner has any questions regarding this amendment, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned. If an extension of time for this paper is required, petition for extension is enclosed.

Respectfully submitted,

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October 22, 2009

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